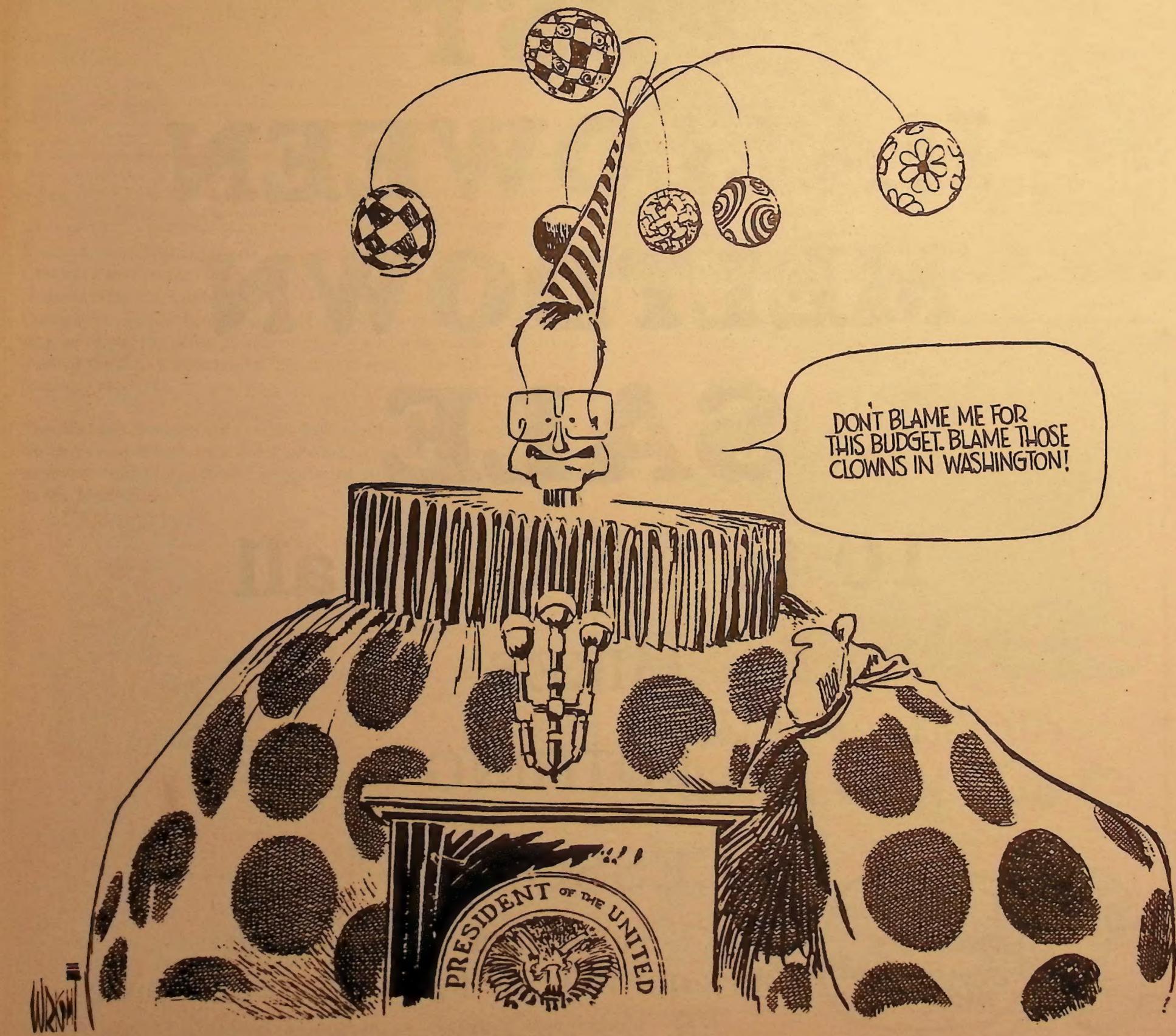


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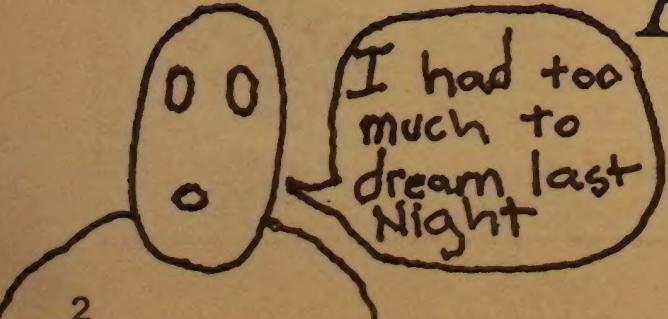
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From time to time the Comic News receives fan mail of sorts. Last week we received a large manila envelope from some of the inmates at the Carl Robinson Correctional Institution in Enfield Connecticut. Inside were ten letters expressing appreciation for the way we report the news. It's nice to know we make a difference by making the time a little easier. We always appreciate hearing from our readers.

Now that the elections are over we feel confident in the choices we've made and look for a quick resolution to the plethora of problems confronting these newly elected officials. We also believe in the Tooth Fairy.



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DAVID HOOKS

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IZZY GESELL

413-586-2274

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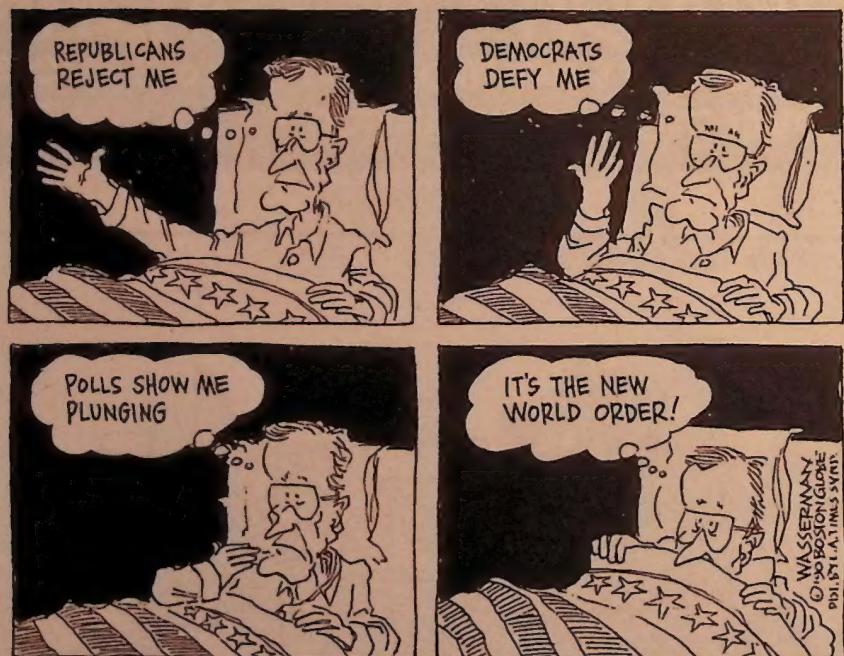
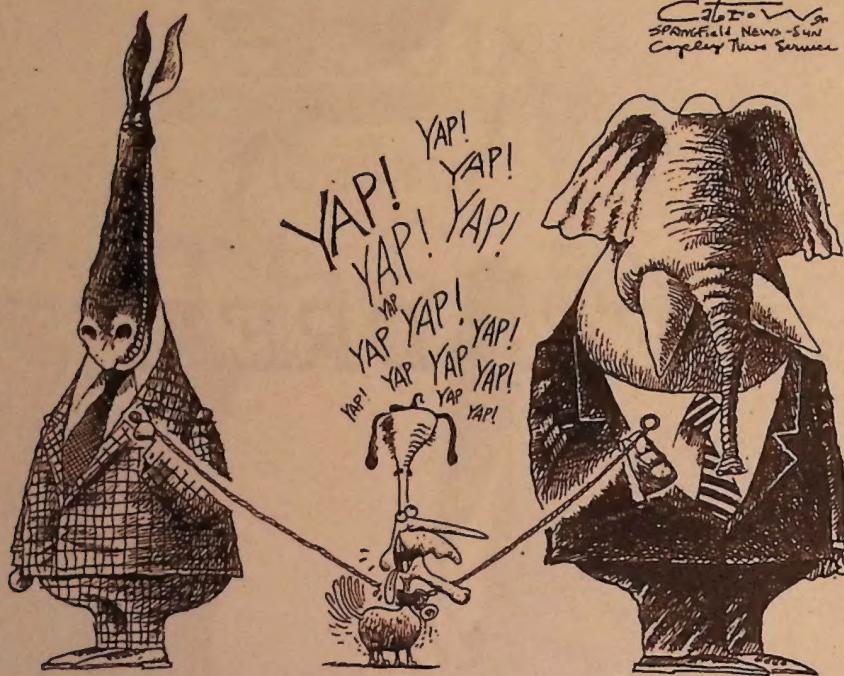
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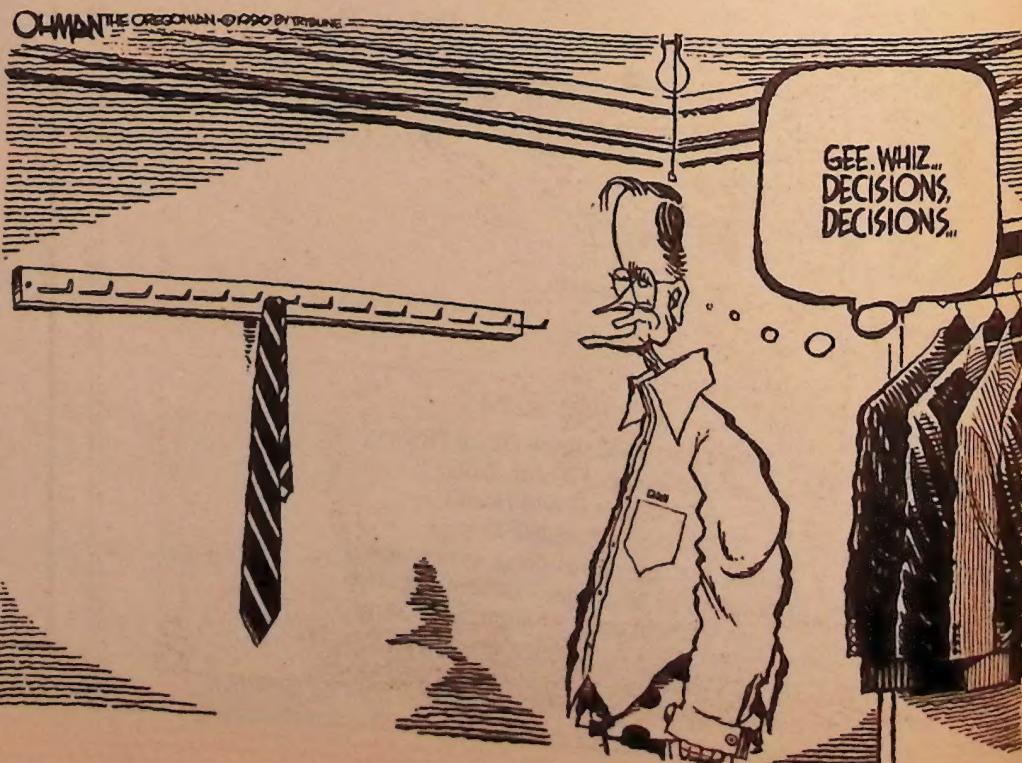
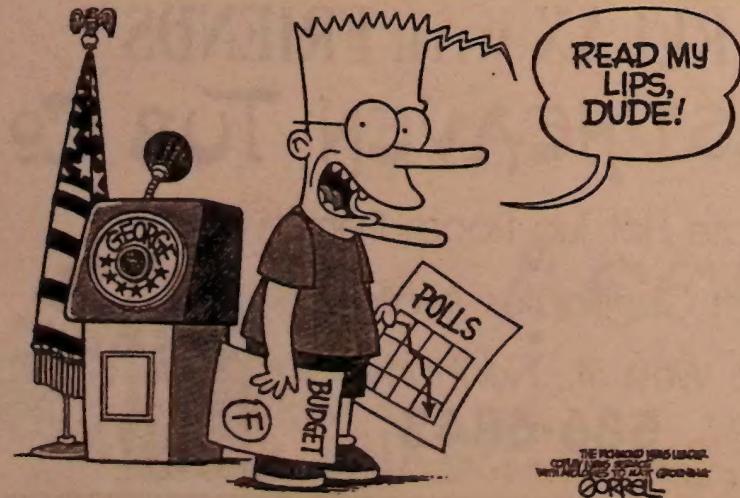
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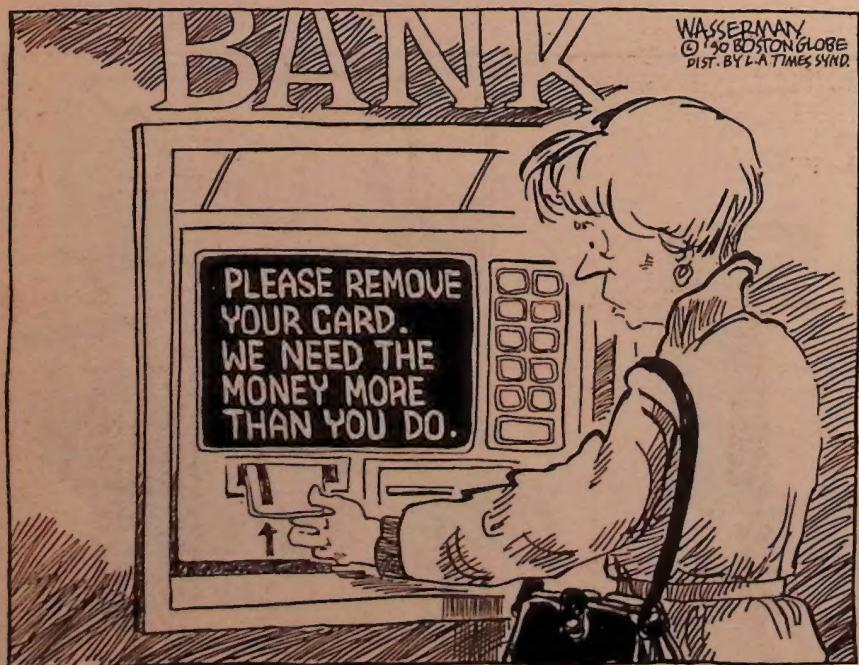
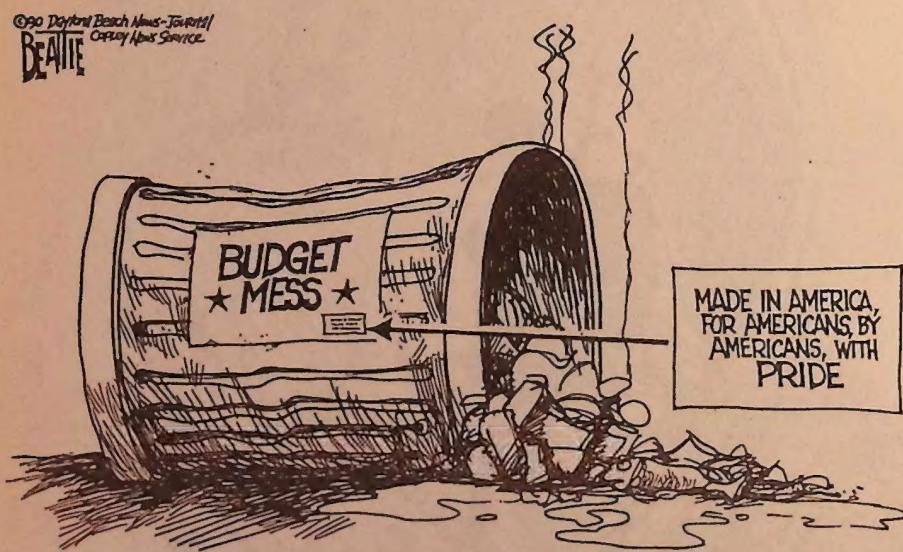
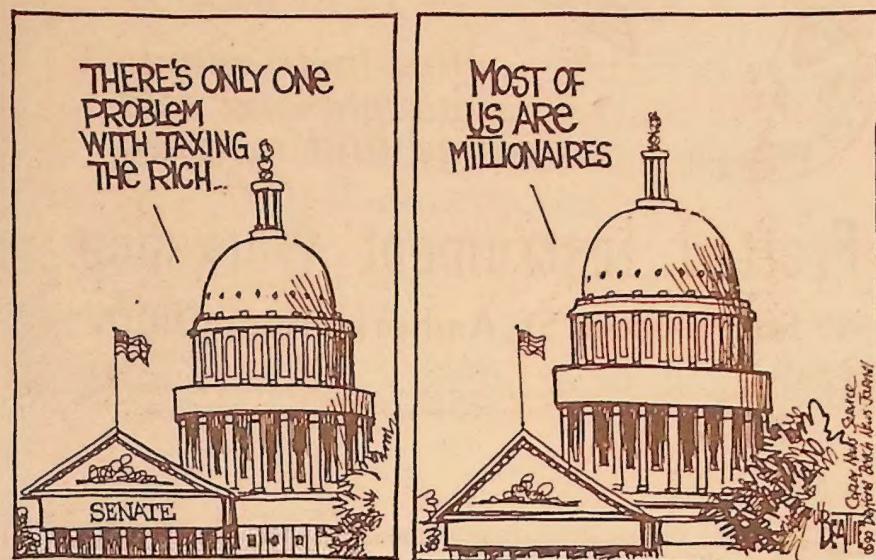
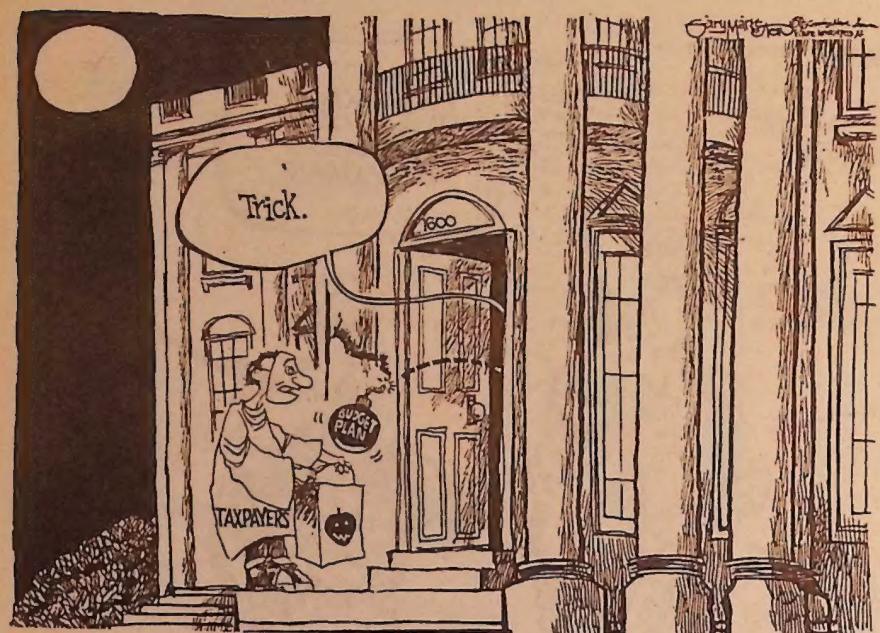
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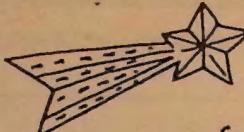
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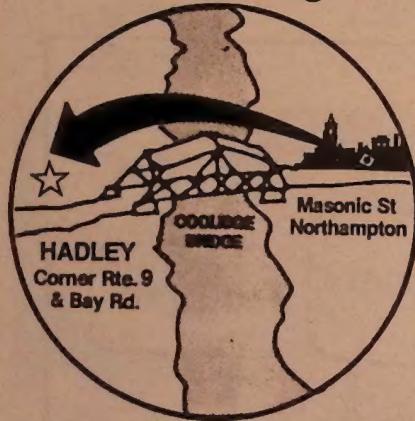
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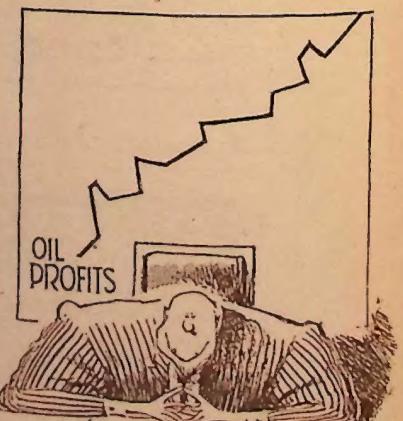
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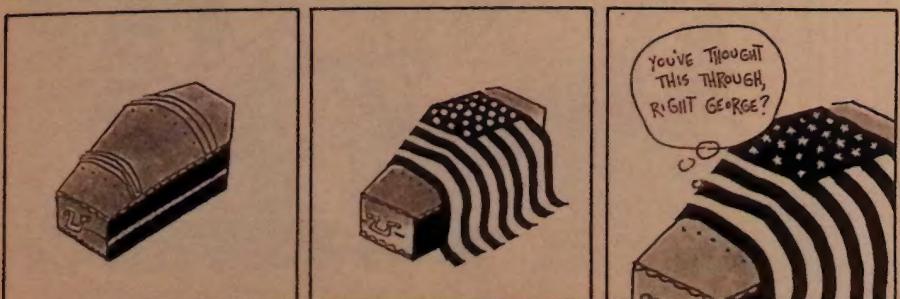
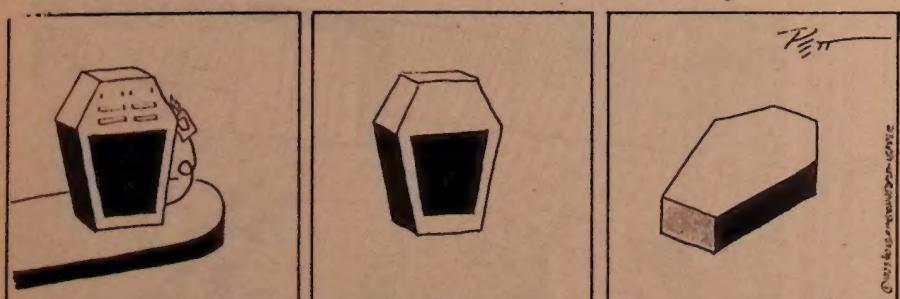


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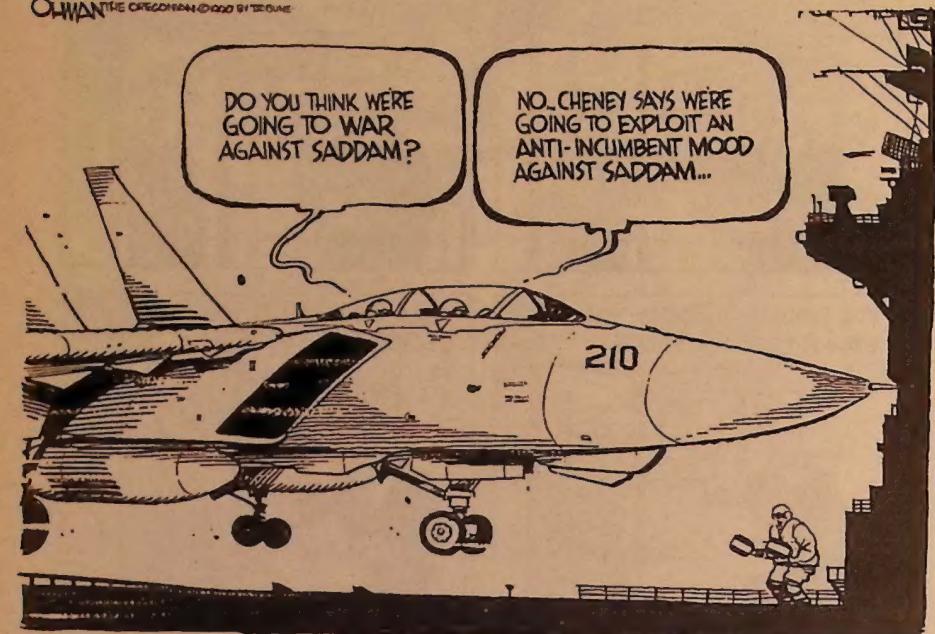
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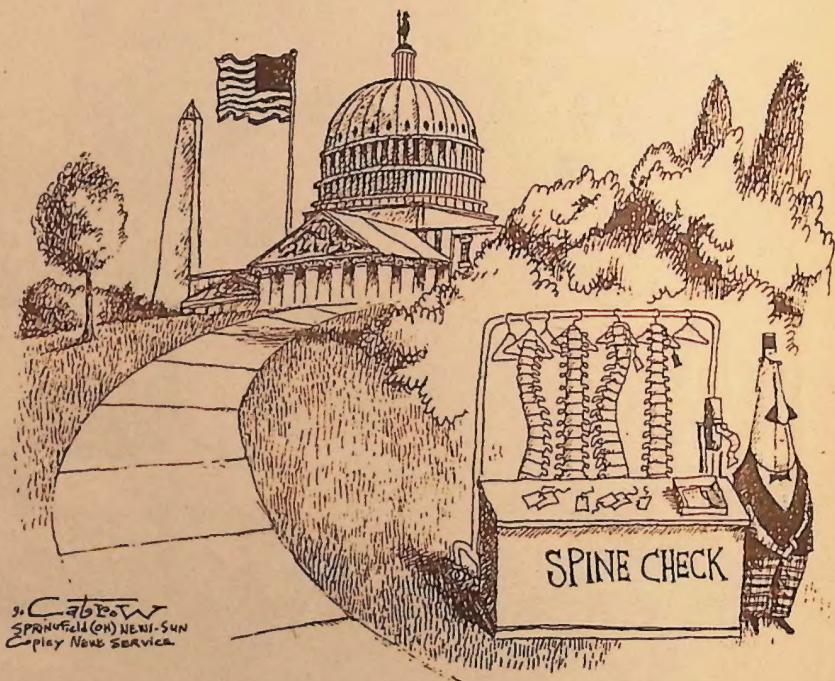
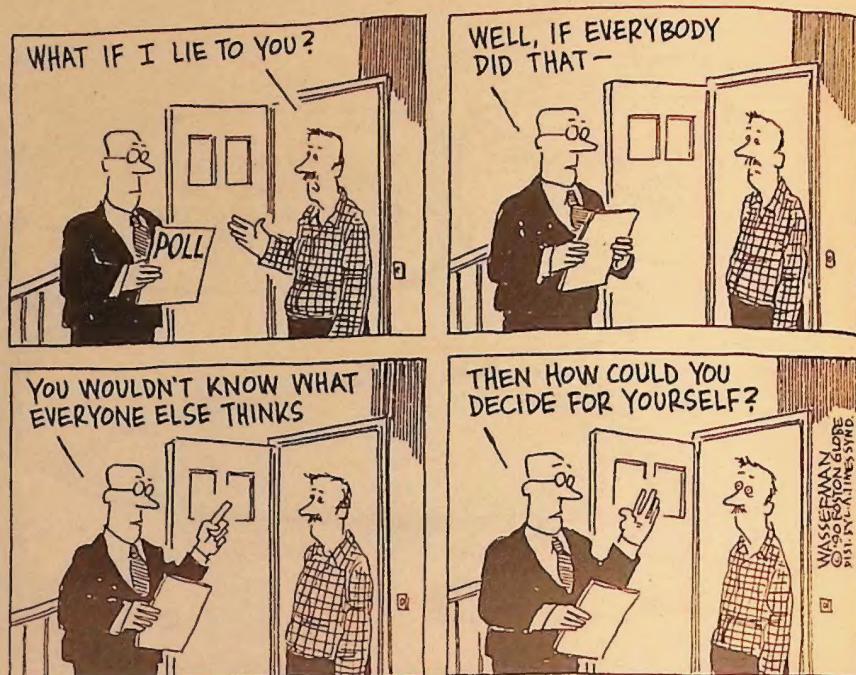
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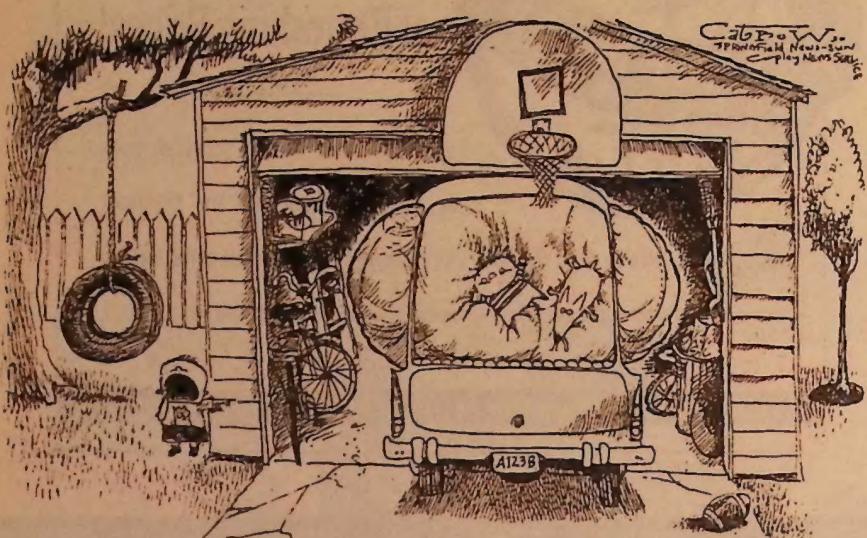
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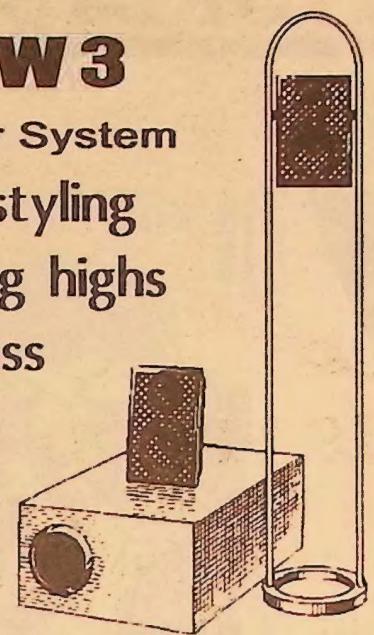
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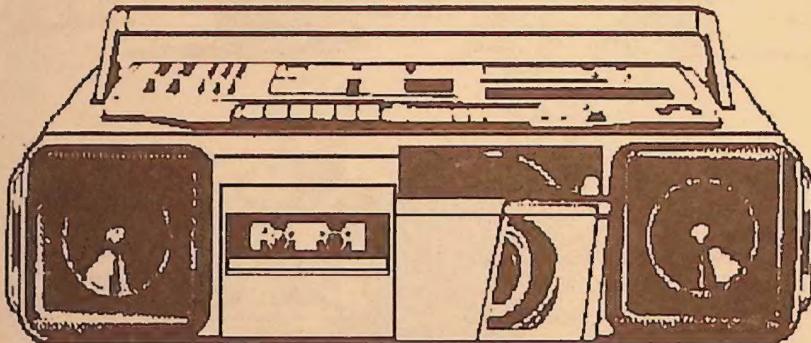
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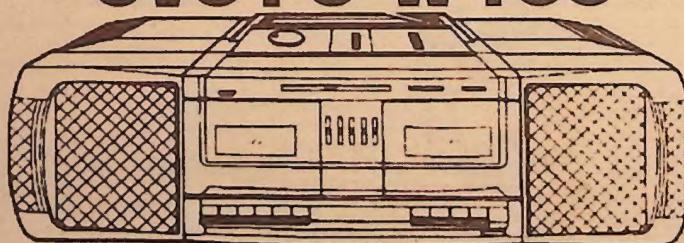
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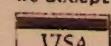
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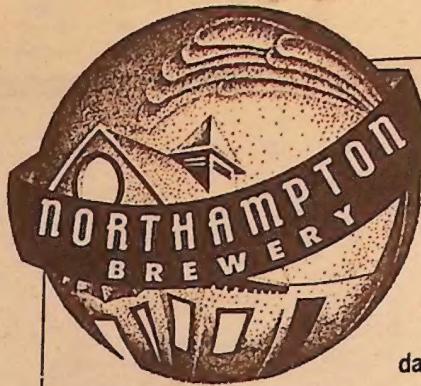
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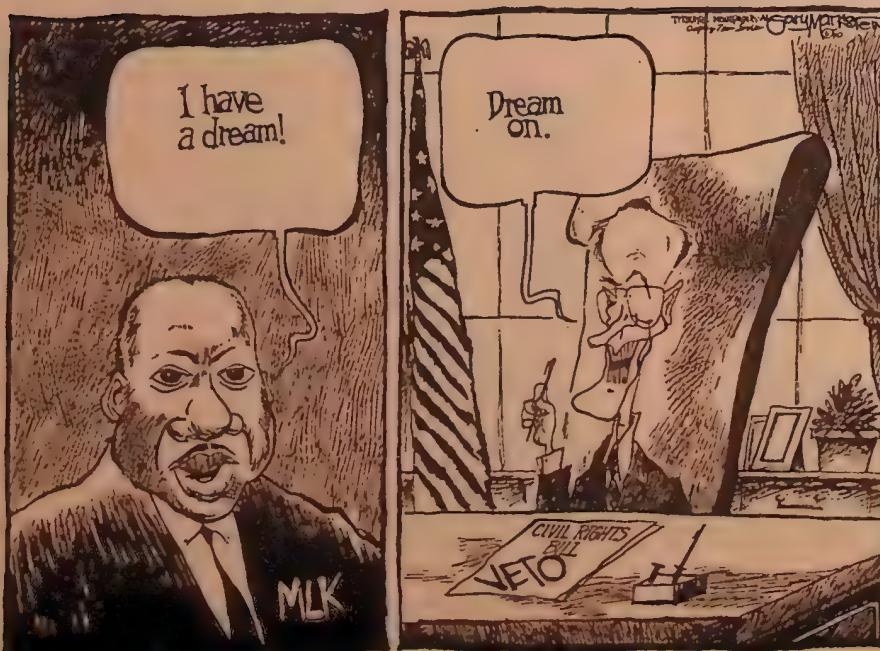
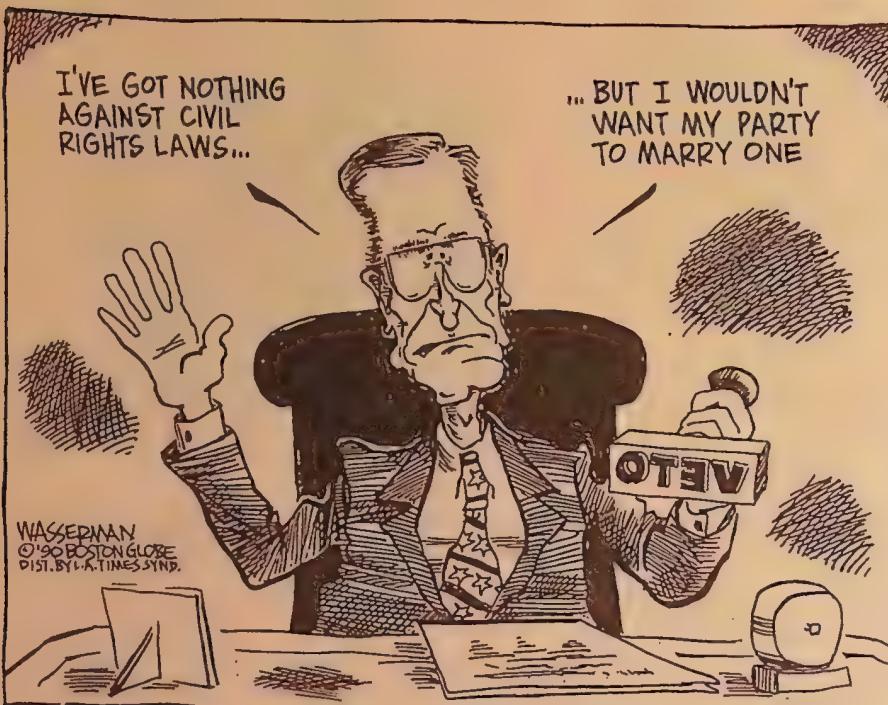
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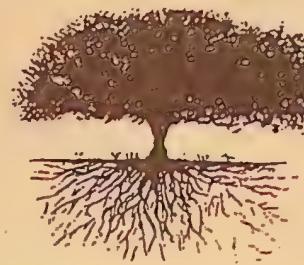
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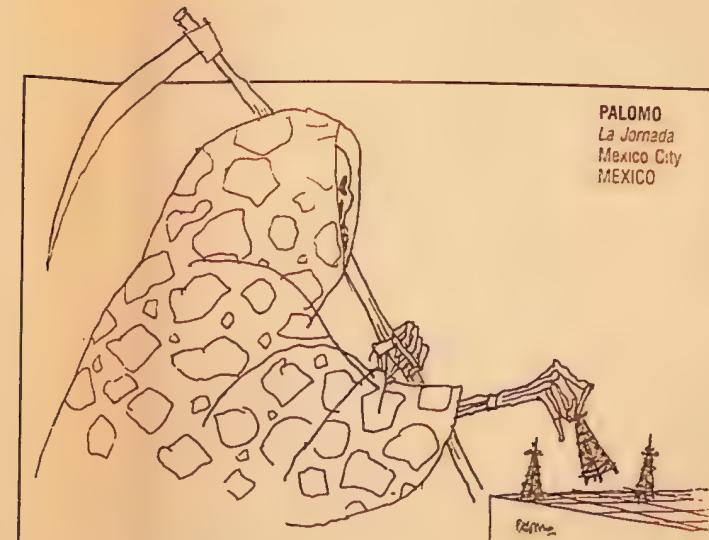
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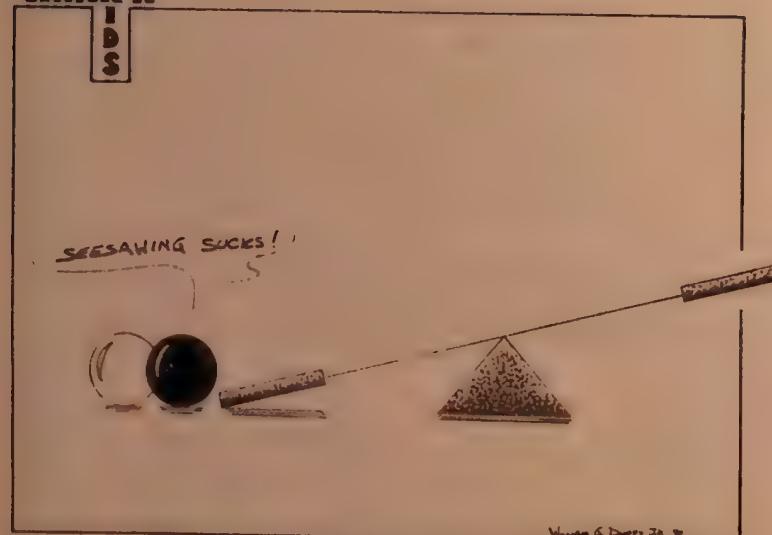
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On Dec. 13, 1916, more than 10,000 Austrian and Italian soldiers were shooting at each other in the Alps. Gunfire kicked off a snow avalanche. It wiped out just about all of them. Similar Alps avalanches in those World War I years reportedly killed at least 60,000 people. But they take up almost no room at all in the history books.

Claim is there's enough stone in Egypt's Great Pyramid of Cheops to build a 10-foot wall all the way around France.

The wife of Roman Emperor Claudius in 54 A.D. fed him poison mushrooms. He got well. She arranged to have the back of his throat tickled with a poison feather. That didn't kill him. She personally gave him a poison enema. He went on breathing. That did it. She smothered him with a pillow.

Q. Wasn't the basketball "dunk" illegal once?

A. For eight years. And not that long ago. From 1969 to 1976.

If you can't shear a sheep in three minutes, you're no match for Australia's best.

Understand an occasional flying squirrel drowns in a maple sap bucket.

Q. What's the average price and square footage of a home in Tokyo now?

A. Figure \$432,000 for 675 square feet.

Q. I know Thomas Edison took out more patents than any other American with 1,093. Who comes in second?

A. Edwin Land with 533. What you and I now call the Polaroid first came out as the Polaroid Land Camera.

Too much coffee is more likely to give you an ulcer than too much whiskey, according to one survey.

Scholars say New England's mountains were once higher than today's Himalayas.

One of the Russian histories of Catherine the Great quotes her as having said: "Men make love more intensely at 20, but make love better, however, at 30."

FUN FACTS

Elderly people with pet dogs and cats go less frequently to doctors, according to a UCLA study. That's physicians. No statistics at hand on how often they go to veterinarians.

Q. How much mail will President George Bush get today?

A. About 20,000 letters, if he hasn't said anything.

A third of the money in circulation during the Civil War was counterfeit, according to the historical footnotes.

Q. In crude oil, what's "sweet" and "sour"?

A. "Sweet" has less sulphur so refines more readily.

Earliest Dartmouth students were called to class by an appointed freshman blowing long loud blasts on a conch shell. That didn't end until the college collected enough money to buy a big bell.

Something looks wrong with the spelling, but one who purports to know says: "Boldering" is rock climbing. "Bildering" is building climbing.

A coyote can outrun a wolf. Easily.

An overloaded horse will try. An overloaded mule won't try. An overloaded llama just lies down.

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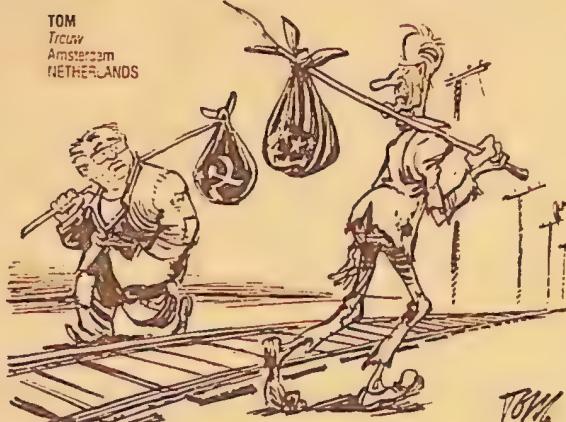
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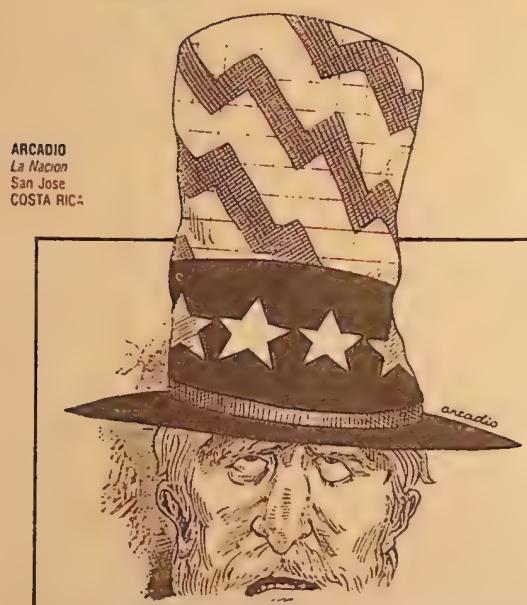
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In pain, Lisa Gherardini had three teeth pulled, then false teeth fitted, thus to postpone Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the "Mona Lisa." She was the model. Her husband had commissioned the work. In 1507. Her false teeth were a sorry fit. Nothing mysterious about that smile. Leonardo never got the mouth right.

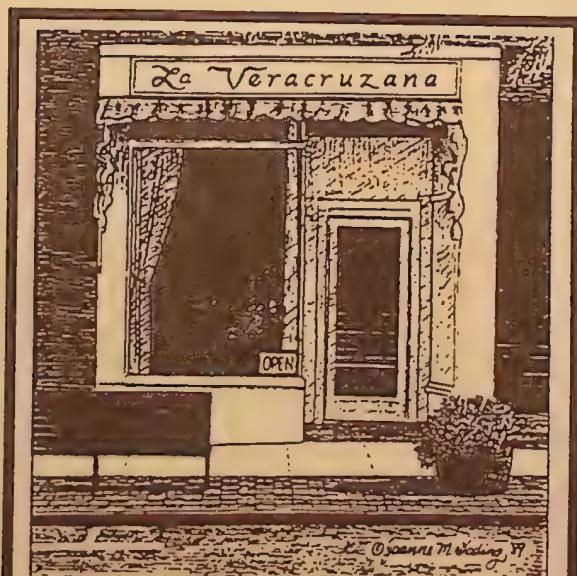
Q. Isn't the house of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd a replica of our White House?

A. The house he built in Spain is.

Translate any document from English into Spanish or French or German or Russian, and the translation, if true to the original, will come out about 25 percent longer. English is much more concise. So says a professional linguist.

Yesteryear's infamous Brinks robbers got \$2.7 million in cash. To find them, the FBI spent \$25 million. To memorialize them in a movie, the filmmakers spent \$18 million.

Want to compete with the cowboys? Try Oklahoma State Penitentiary's Rodeo. In one event, a \$100 bill is attached to a fighting bull's horns. You win, if you get it. You lose, if the bull gets you.



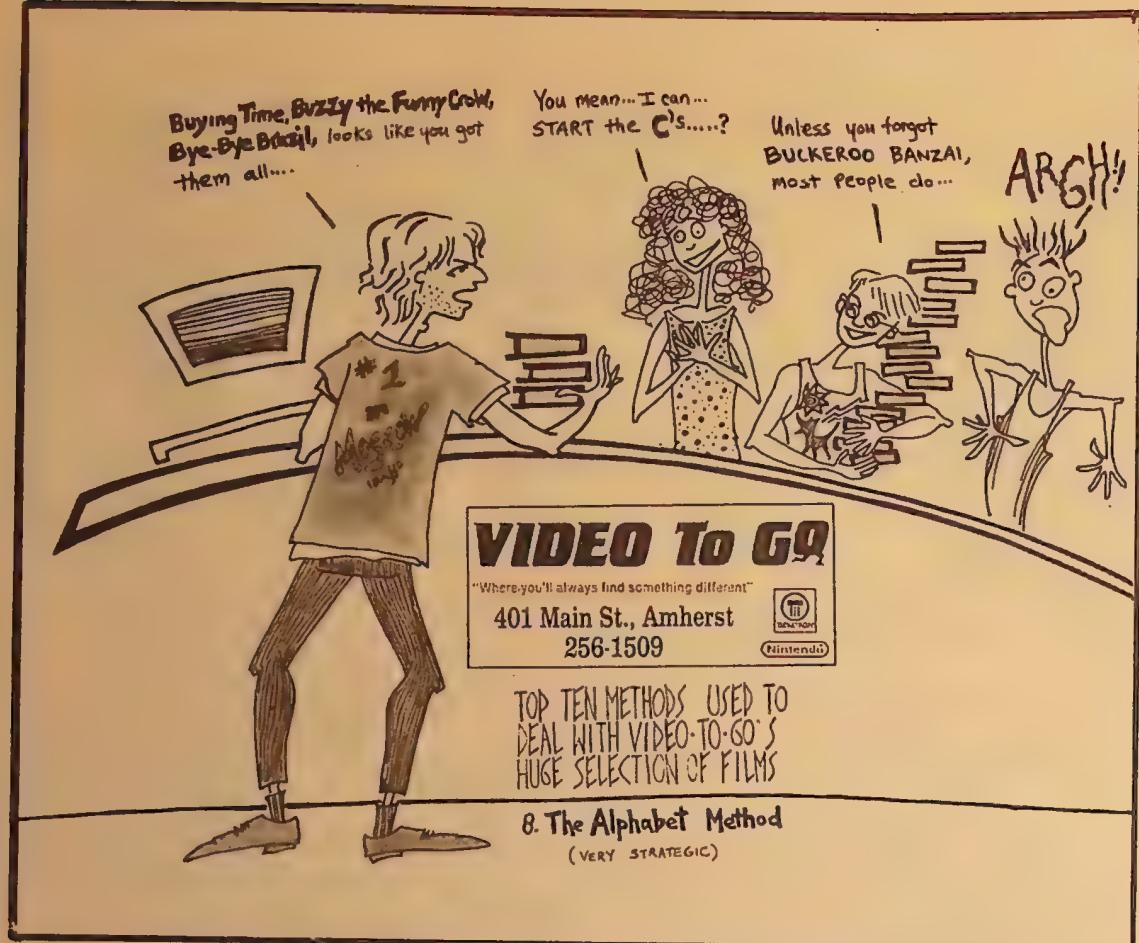
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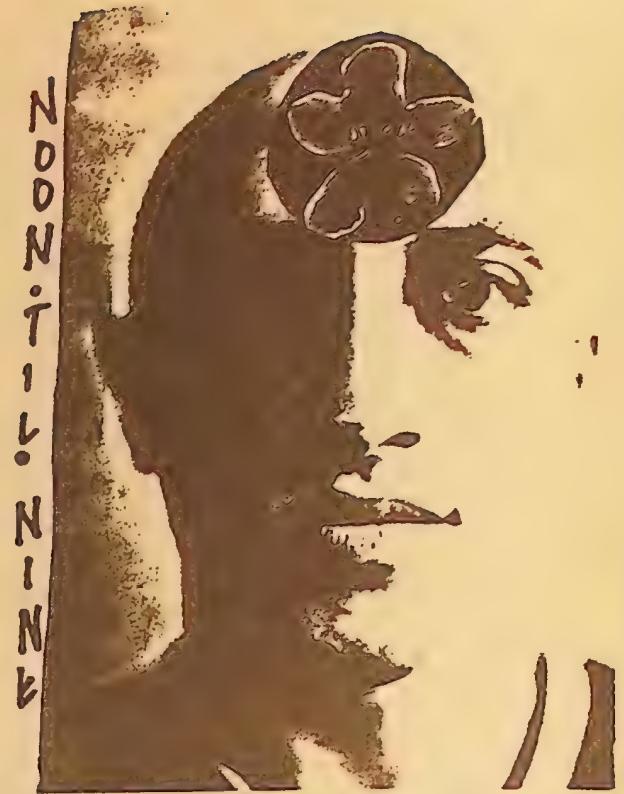
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14

EARTHWEEK: A DIARY OF THE PLANET

By Steve Newman

Earthquakes

Three South African miners were killed and two were injured when a tremor struck near the shaft in which they were working 9,000 feet underground. The accident occurred in an Anglo American Corporation pit near Charletonville, which is one of the world's deepest.

Residents of coastal Thailand were warned to beware of tidal waves created by a strong earthquake under the Indian Ocean. None occurred. The previous day, a moderate quake sent panicked villagers fleeing their homes in northern Thailand. Earth movements were also felt in western Nepal, central Philippines, in the Peruvian jungle, southeastern Iran, and central California.

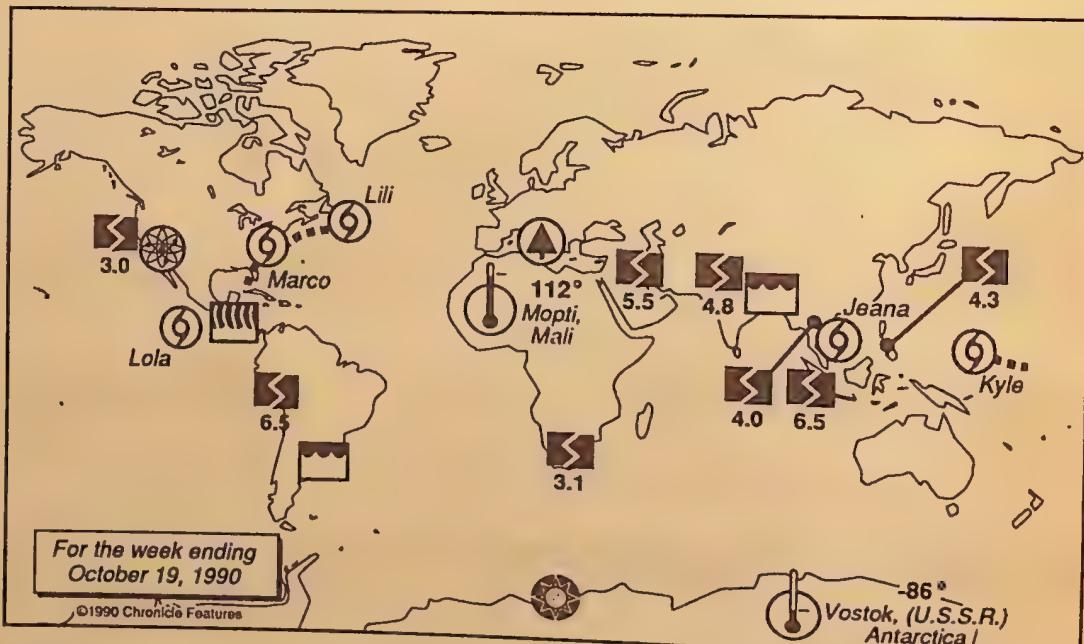
Ozone Hole

The ozone hole that forms each southern winter over the Antarctic appears to have been as extensive as ever this year, despite hopes that it might shrink. Ultraviolet light measurements used to gauge the phenomena since 1987 indicate the amount of ozone loss over Antarctica in August was as great as has ever been recorded. "What this means is that the ozone hole is not going away," said Paul Newman, a visiting scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. "The surprising thing about this year's increase is the meteorological situation was expected to reduce the effect of the losses."

Tropical Storms

Tropical storm Lili and the remnants of tropical storm Marco joined to dump a month's worth of rain in less than a day in parts of southern New England. Earlier, Marco had caused extensive flooding in Georgia and the Carolinas.

Tropical storm Jeana brought gales and heavy rain to Vietnam's central coast. Storms Lola and Kyle



churned the open waters of the Pacific Ocean.

reports from the state of Assam said that 2,670 villages were inundated.

Testing

The U.S. conducted its seventh underground nuclear test of the year at the Nevada Test Site on October 12. The blast, detected by seismologists as far away as Sweden, registered 5.7 on the Richter scale, and had a force of 40 to 150 kilotons.

Floods

Heavy rains caused flash flooding and mudslides that killed 17 people and left several thousand homeless in the southern Brazilian city of Blumenau. Torrents of mud and water swept through the city's densely populated industrial neighborhoods of Garcia and Progresso, ripping out trees and sweeping away vehicles.

Late monsoon floods in northeastern India affected more than one and a half million people. Press

Volcano

Molten rock spewing from Hawaii's Kilauea volcano destroyed another home and threatened those remaining in three other areas. The lava erupted just upslope from a deserted street in the once-prosperous Kalapana Gardens subdivision, where only four homes have escaped Kilauea's fire.

Geothermal Explosion

A geyser exploded in western El Salvador, leveling homes and killing 13 people. The 3 a.m. eruption left a huge crater, and shot water, mud, and stone 350 feet into the air near El Barro. The geyser was not used to generate electricity, but the town lies in one of El Salvador's most volcanically active regions, and is the site of Central America's largest geothermal electricity generating plant.

Mafia Refuge

Italian officials plan to force members of the Mafia out of their remote mountainous refuge at the southeastern tip of the country, and turn it into what could be the largest national park in Europe. Aspromonte, where caves are now used to imprison victims of the mafia's "protection racket," would become a peaceful retreat. Vacations could wander on nature trails or explore natural science in new museums. Theoretically, 27,000 national forest guards patrol the area, but the "Ndrangheta," or Calabrian branch of the Mafia, is the force that controls it, and puts out forest fires. Their expulsion from the wilderness would mean the end of an era in which the efficiency of organized crime preserved nature against man-made destruction.

Additional Sources: World Meteorological Organization, U.S. National Hurricane Center at Miami, U.S. Climate Analysis Center, and the U.S. Earthquake Information Center.

EARTHWEEK: A DIARY OF THE PLANET

By Steve Newman

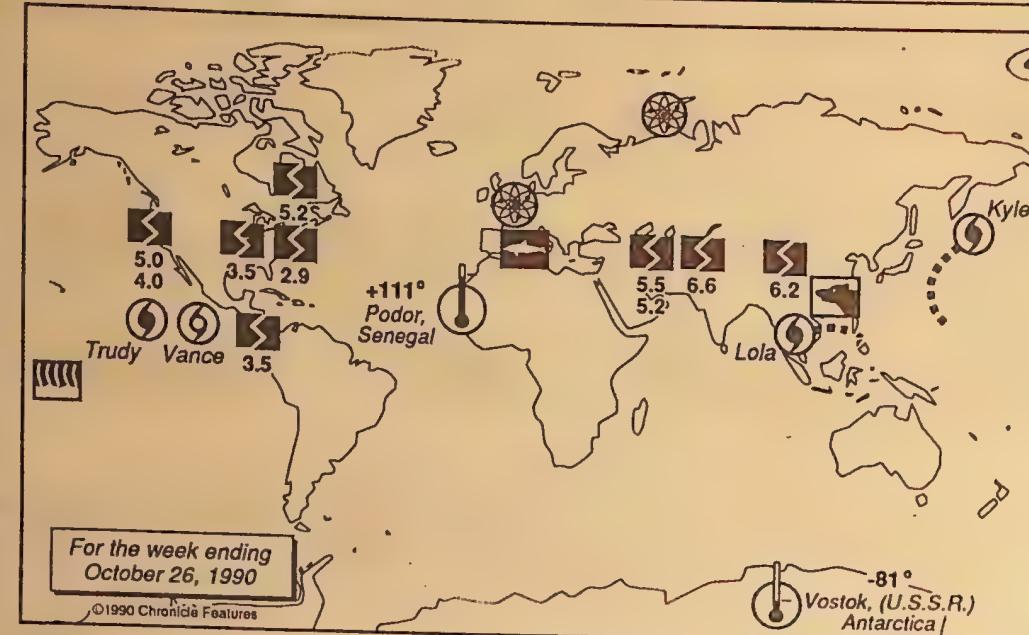
Nuclear News

The Soviet Union carried out its first underground nuclear test in more than a year on October 24. The bomb was detonated at the alternate Soviet test site on the Arctic island of Novaya Zemlya, and had a force of between 20 and 150 kilotons. Testing at the main Semipalatinsk test range in the Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan was suspended last October after widespread protests in nearby cities, and a threat by miners to go on strike if further explosions occurred.

Concrete drums containing nuclear waste have leaked plutonium into the ground on the outskirts of Paris, close to where hundreds of children play each day. The daily newspaper *Le Parisien* said that an independent German scientific team from the University of Bremen concluded that the leaked plutonium in soil samples is a threat to residents of the town of Saint Aubin. The official French Atomic Energy Commission denied the report, and said contamination was well below minimum danger levels.

Earthquakes

A magnitude 6.2 temblor, and several strong aftershocks, rocked western China's remote Gansu province, killing one person and collapsing a large number of homes. A powerful earthquake centered in northern Afghanistan's rugged Hindu Kush mountain range sent shock waves through the Indian subcontinent and neighboring Soviet republics. At least 70 people were injured by the quake in the northern Pakistan city of Peshawar. A tremor in the Sierra Nevada caused rockslides that closed three roads near California's Yosemite National Park, and was felt as far away as San Francisco. Earth movements were also felt in Iran, Costa Rica, eastern Canada, the Chesapeake Bay region, Southern California, and southern Illinois.



El Niño

Oceanographers measured a further rise in sea surface temperatures in the central tropical Pacific, and fear it could be the early stages of the warm-water phenomenon El Niño. While the area of warm water would have to grow larger and warmer before affecting worldwide weather patterns, it could be powerful enough to disrupt this year's Australian monsoon and cyclone seasons, which normally become established in December.

Tropical Storms

Typhoon Lola lashed central Vietnam, killing seven people before unleashing further flooding in parts of northern Thailand still recovering from Typhoon Ira. Radio Hanoi reported that 110 of the 145 villages in coastal Thua Thien-Hue province were submerged. In Thailand, 34 people and 3,000 farm animals drowned in the

massive floods that inundated 1.3 million acres of farmland and 2,480 villages.

Typhoon Kyle, hurricane Trudy and tropical storm Vance moved harmlessly over open waters.

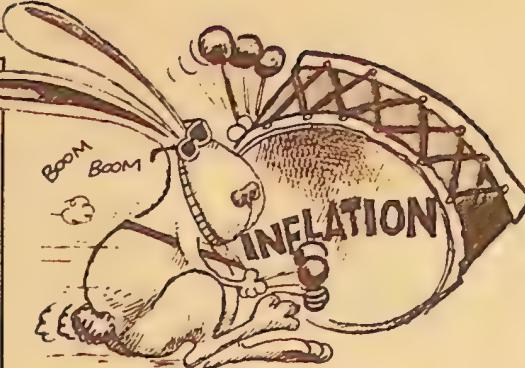
Marine Virus

The virus which decimated the seal population of the North Sea three years ago is now thought to have killed thousands of dolphins in the Mediterranean since August. Mike Riddell, director of an aquatic park in the southern French city of Antibes, said tests carried out on the dolphins which washed ashore showed they were infected with the Mobilli virus. The disease is similar to canine distemper, and Riddell believes the dolphins could be treated with a vaccine similar to one used for dogs. So far, the outbreak has only affected Stenella dolphins in the western Mediterranean, the most common species in the region.

Bear Trade

A Chinese newspaper report accused officials from an agency in charge of protecting China's wildlife with trapping black bears and selling them to restaurants that use them to entertain guests. A reporter from Canton's independent *Ming Pao* made the discovery after a black bear was seen fleeing the swank White Cloud Restaurant, a favorite eatery of local officials. Operators of the establishment are alleged to have handcuffed the beast since August, and regularly made it perform for guests. The reporter claims that some restaurants also kill the bears and use them to make bear's paw soup. Exotic dishes like boar, snake, and cat stir-fry are commonplace in southern China.

Additional Sources: U.S. National Hurricane Center, U.S. Military Joint Typhoon Warning Center at Guam, U.S. Climate Analysis Center, U.S. Earthquake Information Center, and the World Meteorological Organization.



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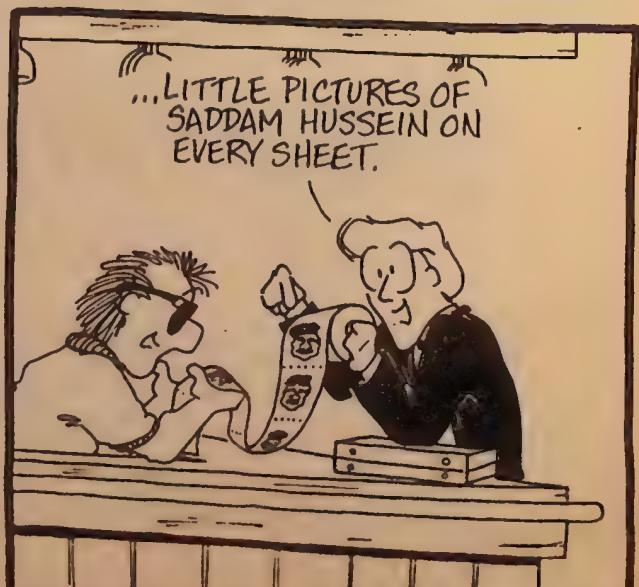
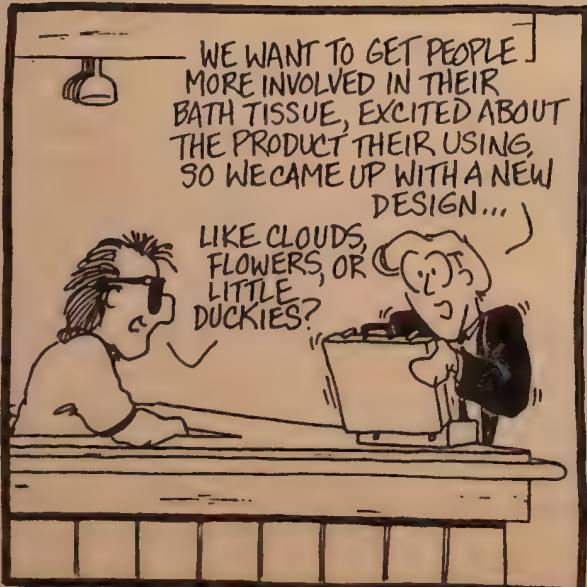
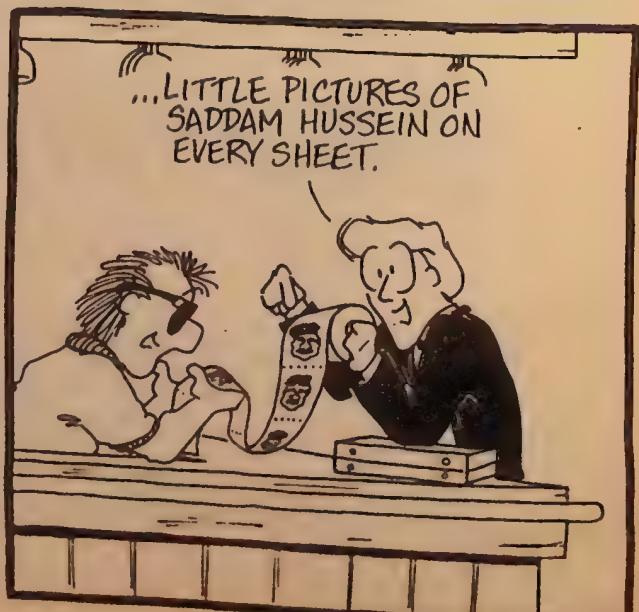
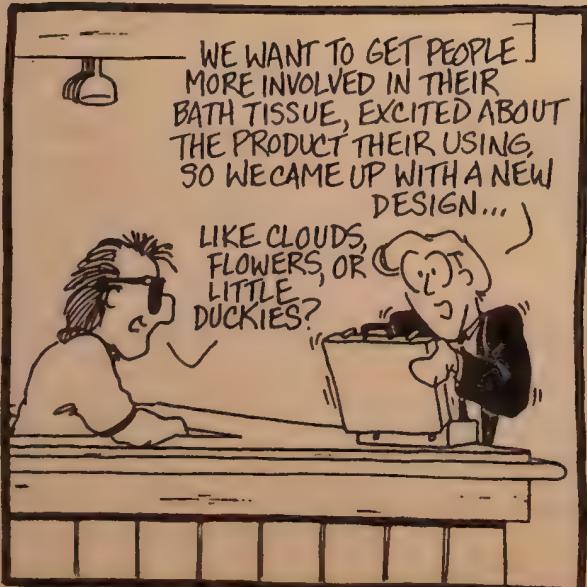
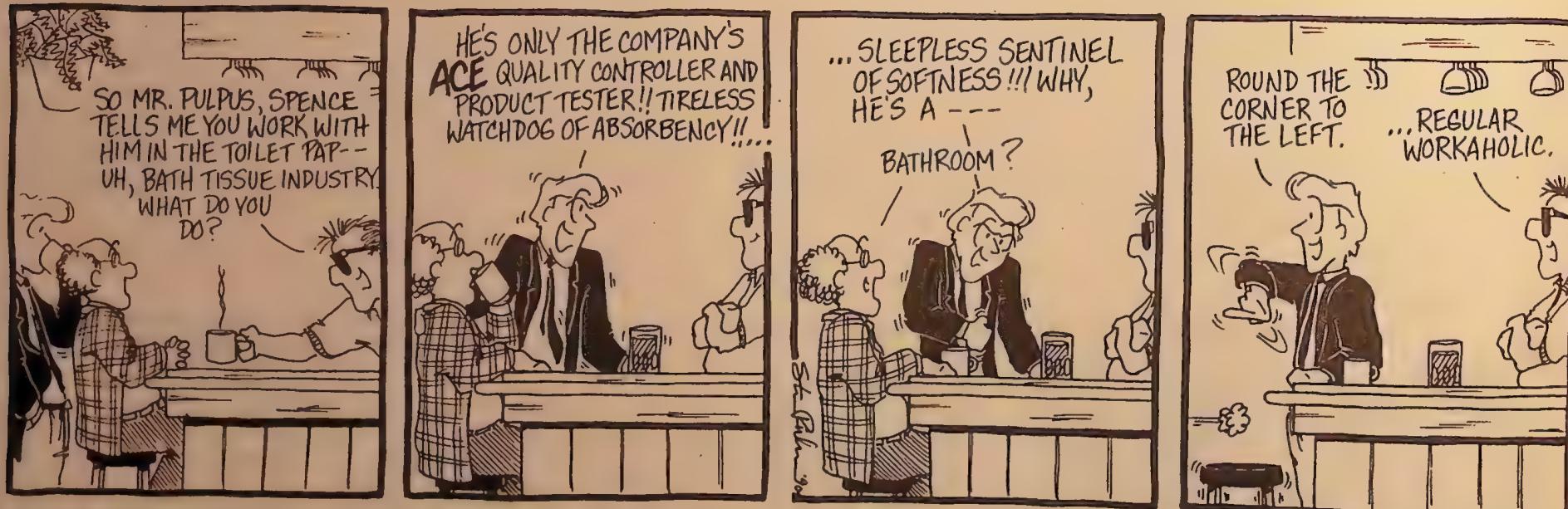
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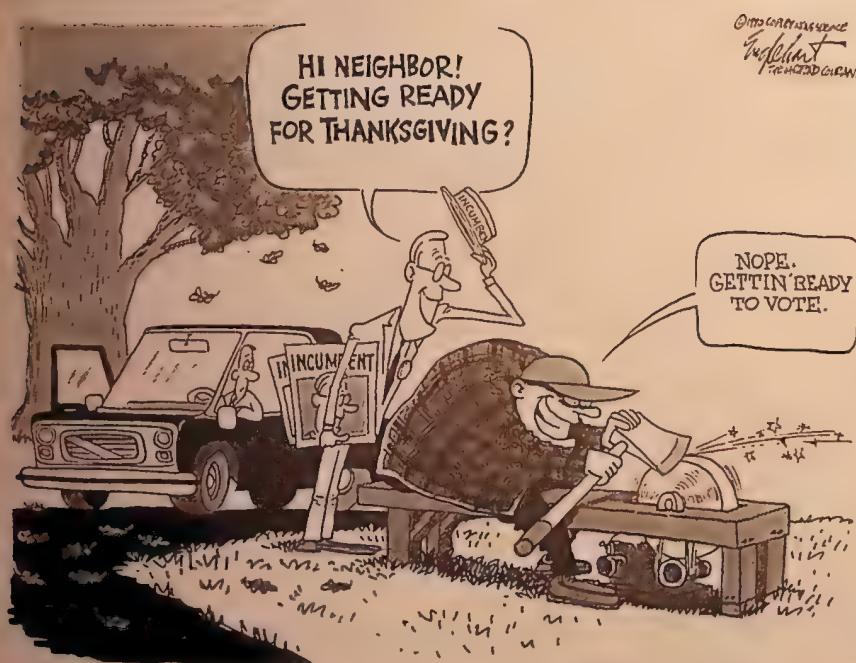
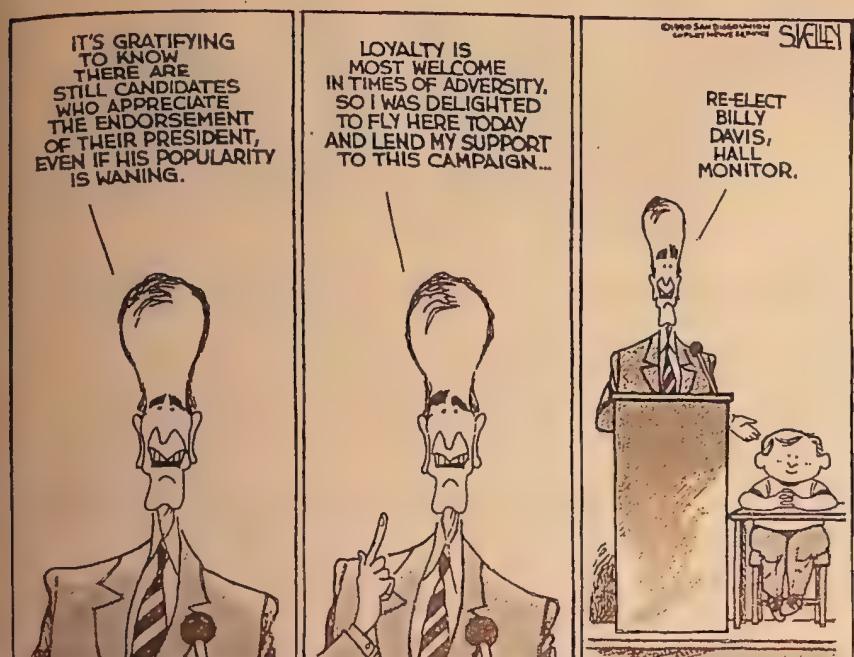


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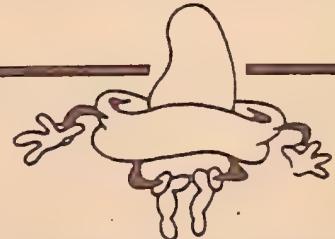
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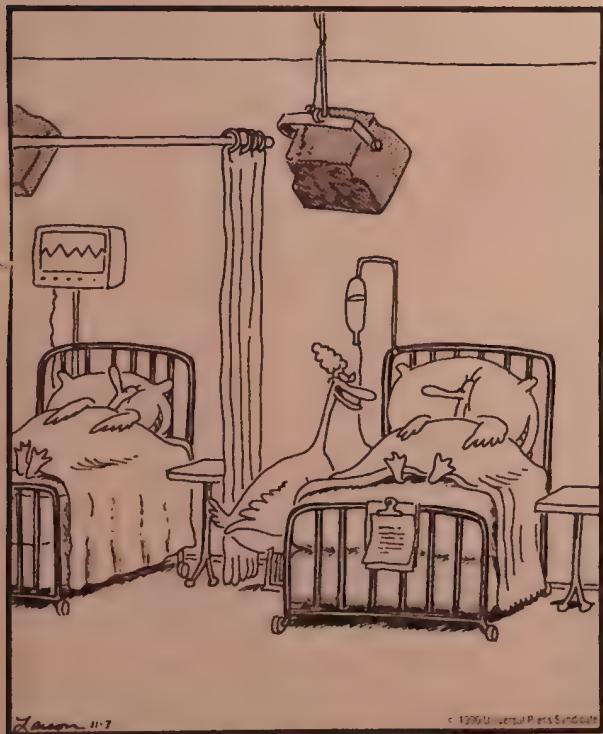
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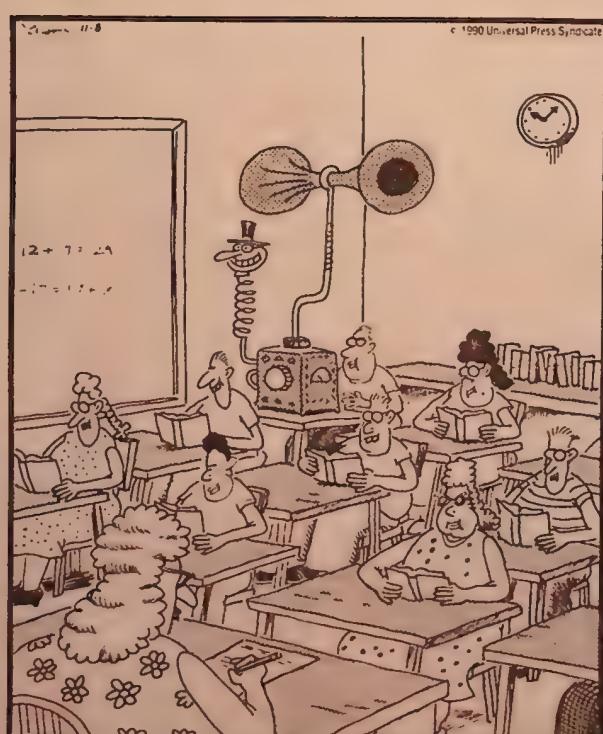


THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



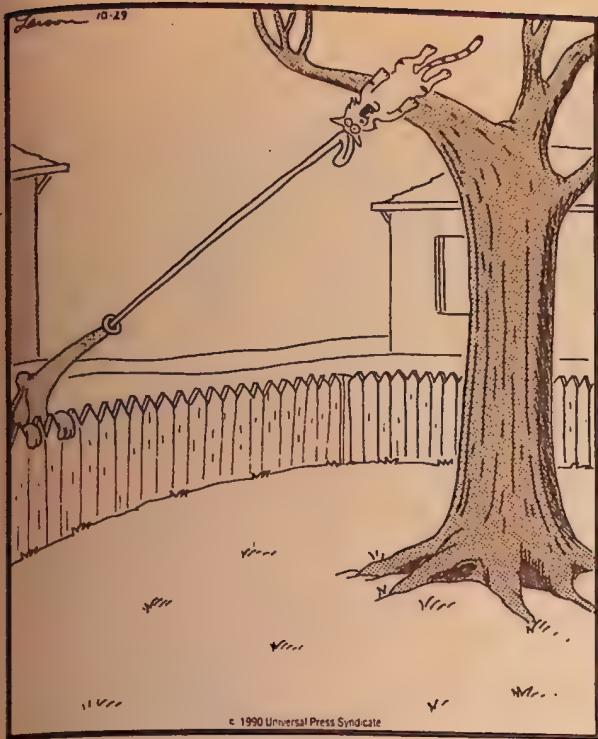
"It's just a miracle you pulled through, George. . . .
Why, it was only a few hours ago the whole
family was deliberating on whether or not to
wring your neck."



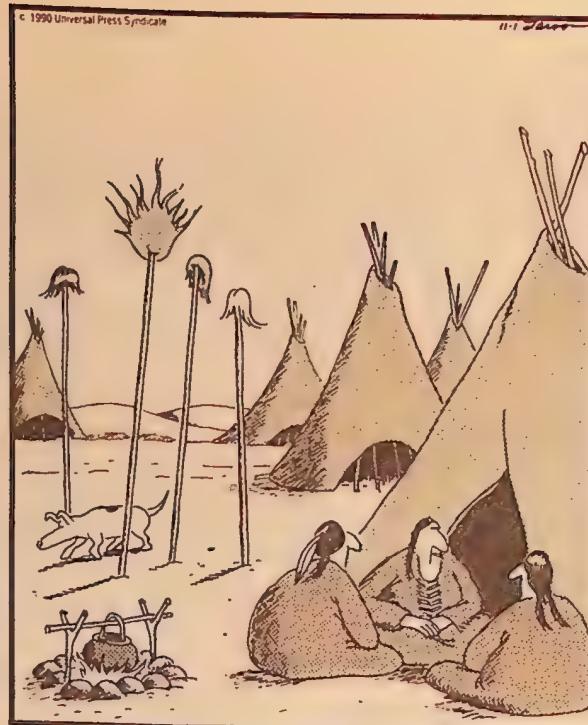
The class was quietly doing its lesson when Russell,
suffering from problems at home, prepared to
employ an attention-getting device.



"OK! I'll talk! I'll talk! . . . Take two sticks of
approximately equal size and weight — rub
them together at opposing angles using
short, brisk strokes . . ."



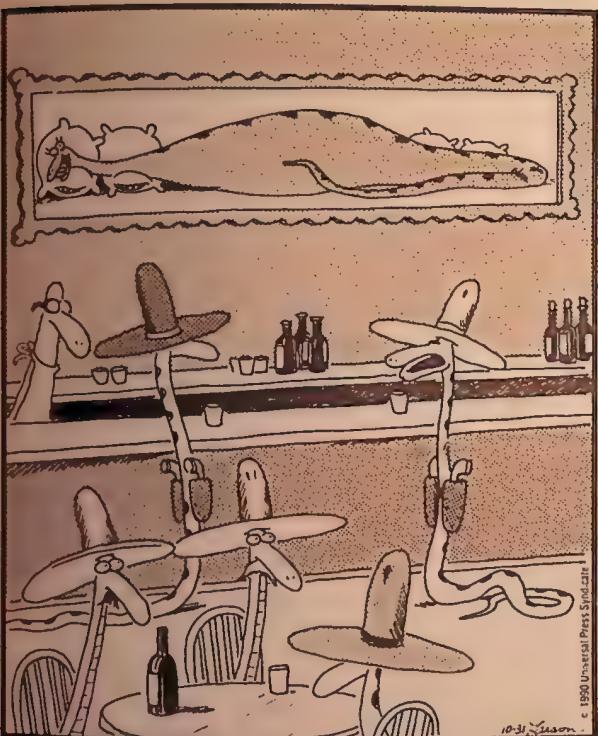
Aardogs



The fate of Don King's great-great-grandfather



Young ants entertaining themselves with a grape



"Who are we kidding, Luke? We know this is going to be just another standoff."



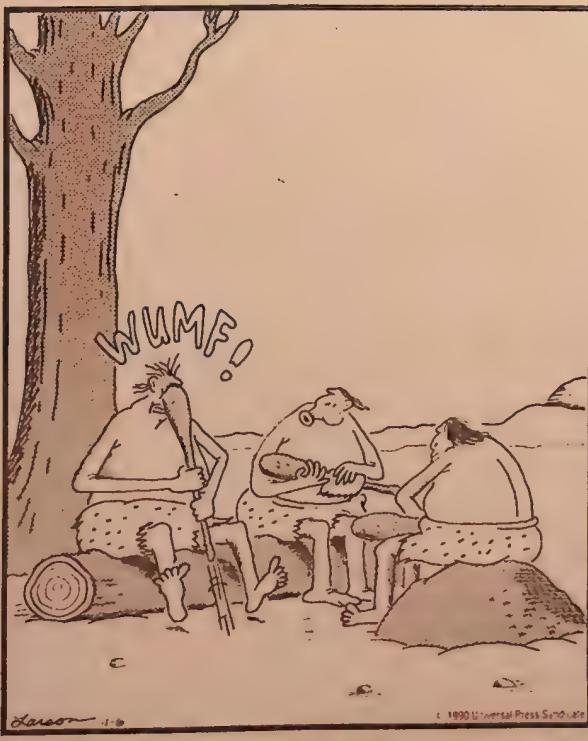
"You know, it's really dumb to keep this right next to the cereal. . . In fact, I don't know why we even keep this stuff around in the first place."



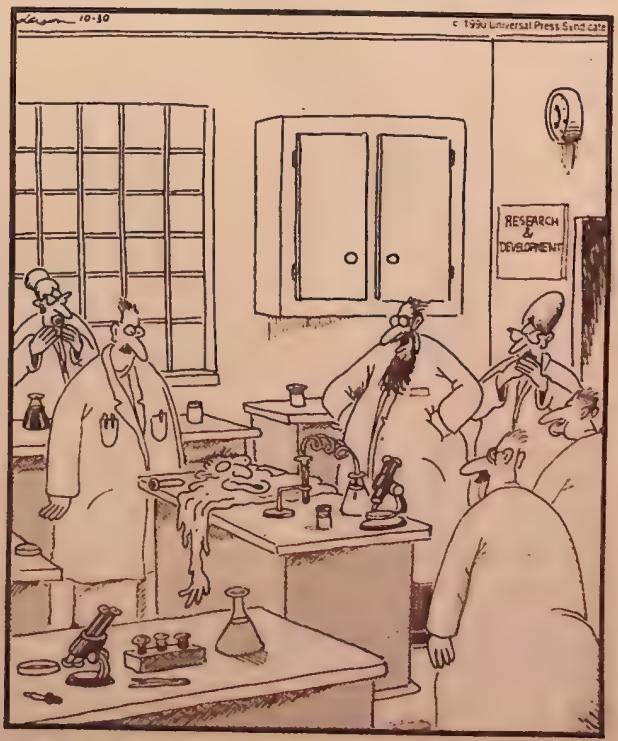
Far away, on a hillside, a very specialized breed of dog heard the cry of distress.



"Well, if there's a bone stuck in your throat, you deserve it! . . . Do you see anyone else around here stupid enough to order fish?"



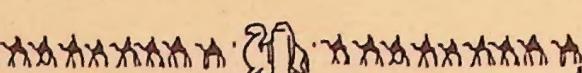
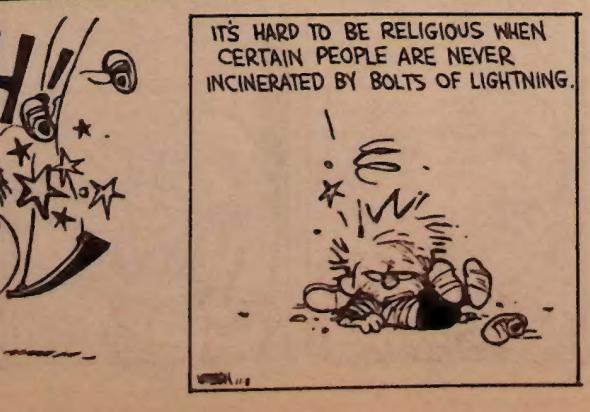
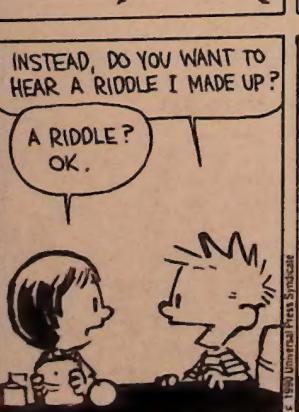
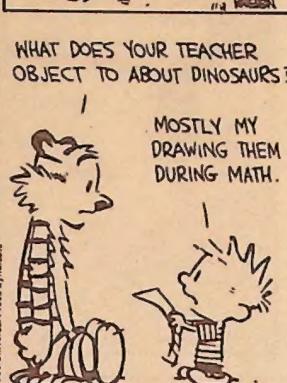
As the small band of hunter-gatherers sat around cleaning their weapons, one made the mistake of looking at his club straight on.



"My God! It is Professor Dickie! . . . Weinberg, see if you can make out what the devil he was working on, and the rest of you get back to your stations."



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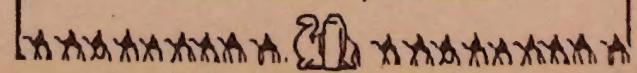
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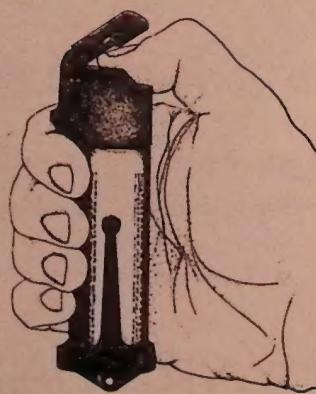
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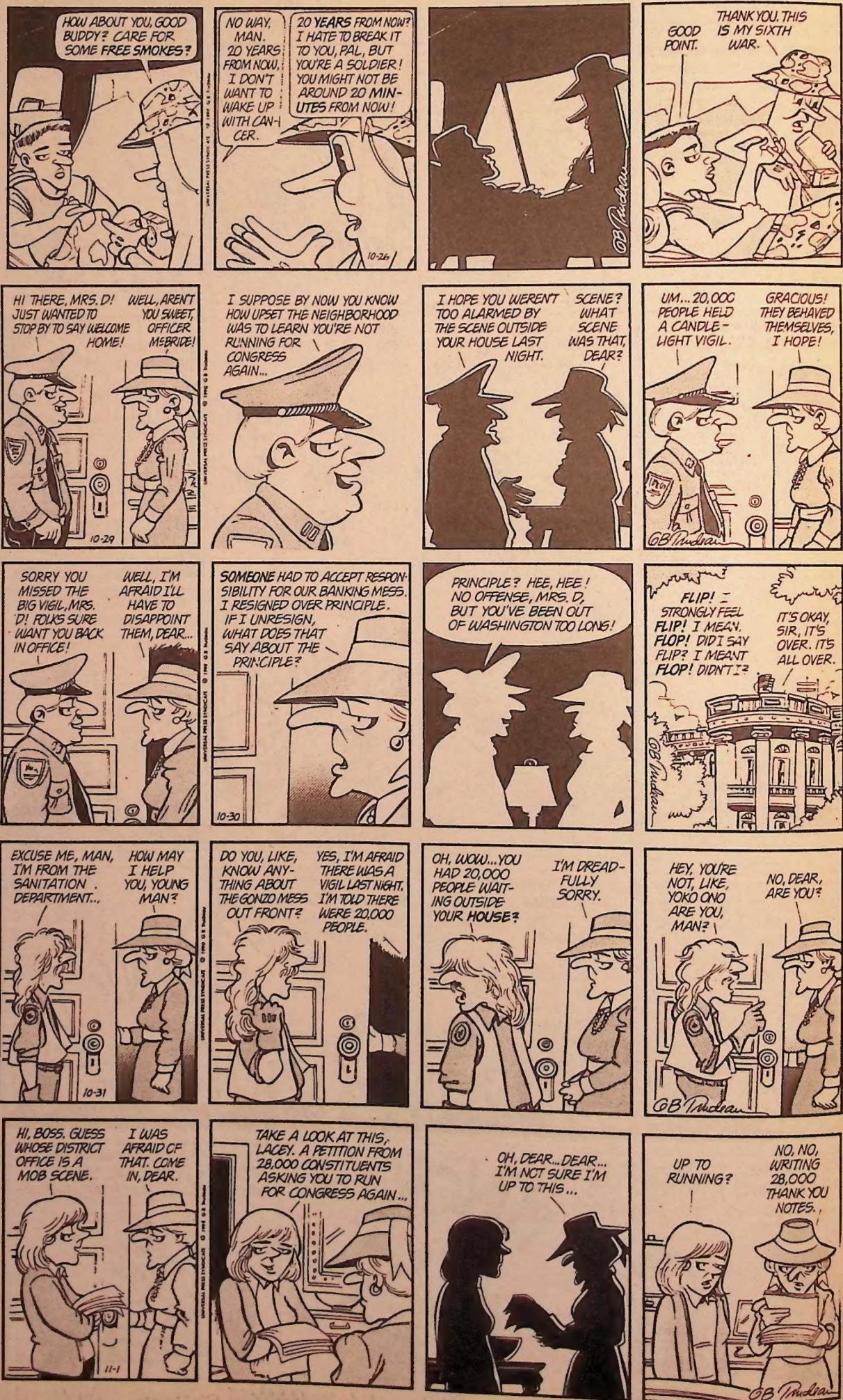
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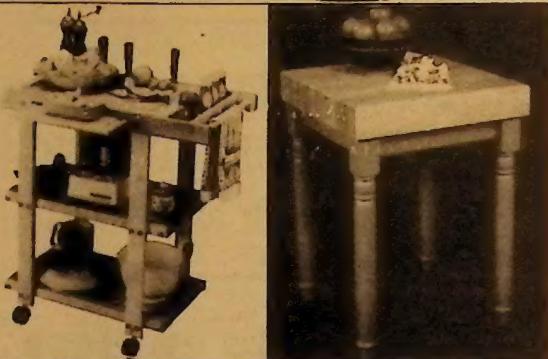
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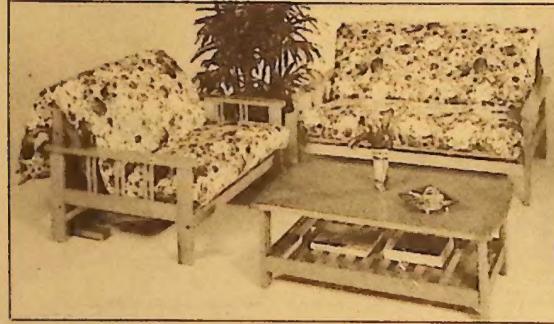
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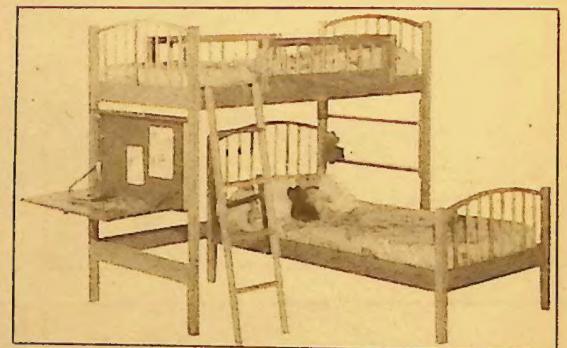
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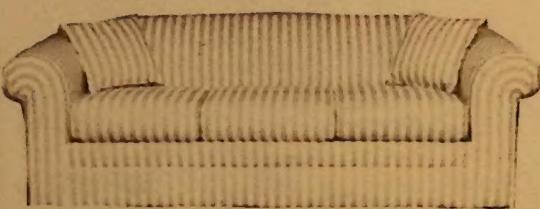
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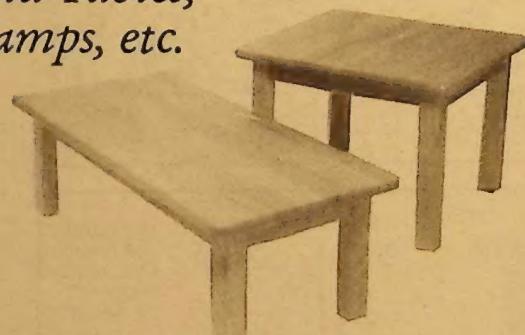
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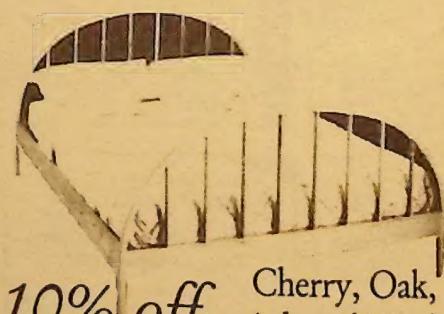
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